



The Lowell Volunteer Partner

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Lowell National Historical Park

DORIS LEGGAT PASSES A VOLUNTEER LEGACY TO US

By Mike Wurm



THE LEGGAT CLAN TRIO: SUSAN, DORIS, & JANET

The park and the city lost one of its most dedicated volunteers in October, when Doris Leggat passed away. Doris contributed thousands of hours over many years behind the scenes to the non-profit causes of her daughters, Sue and Janet. By example and philosophy, Doris passed down to them the commitment to community service.

As the former park volunteer coordinator, Sue Leggat, who died in 2003, greatly shaped the park volunteer program and became the events coordinator, best known for her strong leadership of the Lowell Folk Festival. Janet Leggat has made her greatest impact as the director of the park's major partner, the Lowell Festival Foundation. The Leggats also have also served in leadership roles for the Kiwanis Club and the Greater Lowell Boys & Girls Club.

I remember Doris always doing her bit in helping with the preparation and production of the park and the city's

signature events. She was a classy and yet down-to-earth lady who was always ready to lend a helping hand with a smile. Doris certainly made her mark on Lowell and the park. We miss you much, Doris!

The park volunteer program has recognized Doris with \$50 memorial donations to two non-profits closest to her heart, St. Anne's Church and the Lowell Festival Foundation.

THE ZAKOS FATHER-SON TEAM

Byron Zakos, Electromotive Mechanic Supervisor for the park, is a hands-on sort of guy who works great with park volunteers. However, the volunteer he is closest with is Peter, his adult son. Peter has helped the park periodically over the years when heavy equipment needed to be worked on or moved. Peter really came through in the clutch working with Byron and other employees on a weekend day this past fall to rescue a park tour boat (no visitors on board) from a flooding situation on the canal. For his role in the emergency operation resulting in park labor and dollars saved, Peter is being awarded a plaque and restaurant gift certificate. Thanks, Peter!



THE ZAKOS TEAM: BYRON & PETER

VOLUNTEERING BEHIND THE SCENES AT LOWELL NHP

Many understand the very public aspect about volunteering in a National Park. There are many positions at Lowell that deal with the general public on an ongoing basis.

What about those people who stay in the background? How about those people who attend meetings, who sit on boards, who help prepare exhibits, who take photographs, and who work in the back offices?

In this winter issue, the park is trying to recognize many such volunteers as Doris Leggat, Clee Ace, Jeanette Dose, Art Sutcliffe, and Ray Houde who have contributed so significantly to the park "behind the scenes."

20TH ANNIVERSARY FOLK FESTIVAL EXHIBIT NEEDS VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE

A group of park employees, partners, and volunteers has begun meeting to plan "The Roots of the Lowell Folk Festival" exhibit for installation in the Boott Gallery in June. The exhibit will include music, memories, memorabilia, photos, and art, reaching back at least as far as the Regatta and ethnic festivals of the 1970s. If you would like to work on this exhibit and/or have photos or souvenirs of the festival you would like to loan for the exhibit, please call exhibit coordinator Mehmed Ali at 978-275-1826.

PARK VOLUNTEER COUNCIL

The park is looking for volunteers to participate on the Volunteer Council that will officially start in March. This group--to be made up of park employees, partners, and, most importantly, volunteers--will advise and assist the park in planning, coordinating, and doing volunteer-related events and programs. The council will need to meet at least quarterly in order to advise and assist with the following:

- review of annual volunteer plan;
- planning and production of volunteer training and educational programs for volunteers, including field trips;
- planning of volunteer appreciation events and awards;
- advice on year-round volunteer programs calendar;
- assist in publicity and recruitment, including newsletter articles, website articles, local cable TV shows, and giving off-site outreach programs;
- and any other aspects of the volunteer program that contribute to meeting park goals and improving volunteer morale.

The first meeting of the council will be March 21 at 6:30 at the Mogan Cultural Center. To volunteer for the council or for more information, call Mike Wurm at 978-275-1735.

VOLUNTEERS RECOGNIZED FOR LONG TERM SERVICE

Those volunteers who have given at least three years in Interpretation or Trolleys are being awarded special longevity namebars for their commitment in the public eye:

Fred Forster, Interpretation, 9 years
Louise Sweet, Interpretation, 8 years
Don Thomas, Trolley, 7 years
Mike Gaulin, Interpretation, 6 years
Lloyd Morton, Trolley, 5 years
Sue McNamara, Trolley, 4 years
John Balco, Interpretation, 3 years



FRED FORSTER WITH BECKY WARREN. FRED RECEIVED HIS NAMEBAR FOR HIS NINE YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE PARK.

HOW JEANETTE DOSÉ HELPS ME AT THE PARK LIBRARY OR DOSSIER ON DOSE

BY JACK HERLIHY

Lowell National Historical Park is grateful for the long time volunteer service of Jeanette Dose, from Billerica, Mass. Jeanette began volunteering at the park in March of 1999 and is approaching seven years of faithful service.

Jeanette's primary work with the park has been to continue with the newspaper clipping archiving that began with the park's inception in 1978. She collects, copies, files, adds to the database, and creates a weekly index of articles from published media sources including *The Sun*, *The Boston Globe*, magazines, etc.



Jeanette Dose combs through newspapers for references to the national park as a part of her regular library duties.

Jeanette also assists with park library and curatorial operations and assists with research requests, when called upon to support the park's mission as a research facility. She also helps with cataloging of books, papers, and magazines that are added to our collection.

The park library has amassed an extensive collection of contemporary images from the past 25 years in several formats that includes negatives, slides, and photographs. These images are not cataloged or housed in proper archival settings. Many of these image binders chronicle significant long term park projects that include the restoration of Lower Locks and the Wannalancit (Suffolk) Mills.

Jeanette is working with me in identifying what is in this eclectic mix, temporarily marking the binders topically, and assisting in developing a plan for future cataloging and storage by current museum standards. In its current state this collection is virtually unusable and degradation of the items has begun due to poor storage.

Jeanette's work in the library is critical to the mission of the park in assisting with the newspaper project, image classification, assisting researchers, supporting education programs, and helping with long term exhibit development and support. Jeanette's service to the government is not only appreciated by park management but is exemplary of the successful volunteer program.

Jeanette also volunteers regularly with the Massachusetts Society for the Preservation of Cruelty to Animals in Methuen, where she assists with animal care and adoptions. She also generously gives of her time with the Meals on Wheels food program for the elderly in Bedford, MA. Jeanette is a retired nurse from the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thank you, Jeanette!

ART SUTCLIFFE: LOWELL FOLK FESTIVAL BOARD MEMBER AND TROUBLESHOOTER

By Paul Mueller

Art Sutcliffe contributes his heart, his ears, and much hard work to community service. The Lowell Folk Festival, the Lowell Summer Music Series, the Salvation Army, the Kiwanis, and thousands of people all benefit from his efforts.

Take Art's work for the Lowell Festival Foundation Board. Art has a strong suit in finance and a keen interest in music. Not retired by any means, Art must balance his time as a partner in the Mahoney Funeral Home with going to Festival Foundation meetings, making suggestions about raising money to pay for the yearly event, and recommending musical groups to appear at the festival.



Art Sutcliffe at a recent LFF board meeting in January, 2006

While thousands of attendees enjoy the music and the ambience of the folk festival, hundreds of needy people benefit from services of Lowell's Salvation Army. Art sits on the advisory board of this organization as well. In Lowell the

Salvation Army sends out food baskets on Thanksgiving and Christmas, operates a food pantry, provides lunches for Seniors, assists qualifying homeowners with heating their homes, supports various programs to help teenagers, and runs a "toys for tots" event during Christmas.

For the Salvation Army, Art organizes and runs a 6-hour radio auction event on WCAP to raise money for year-round activities. With his business ties, he is able to get many goods and services donated to the auction for this fund raising event.

Regarding the musicians selected for the folk festival, Art attends other festivals around the country and makes suggestions based on what he sees and hears. At the Lowell Folk Festival, Art does not often have much time to listen to the music. Often he is sent out to solve various problems that come up during the event.

Sue Leggat, a founder of the Lowell Folk Festival, recruited Art to help with various financing tasks. "Sue Leggat had a way of treating volunteers very well."

Art's wife, Debbie, is a regular volunteer at the Lowell Folk Festival as well. She also uses her skills in finance to help the festival.

Art doesn't really seem concerned about finding the time to attend board meetings and work at other events such as the Lowell Summer Music Series. He says, "Lowell has been good to me and my family. Volunteering is a way to give back to the community."

We Need Your E-Mail Addresses

Whether you volunteer regularly or not, we would like tell you about upcoming events and send you digital "PDF" versions of the newsletter. If you want to be on the Volunteer Office's emailing list please drop a line at paul_mueller@nps.gov.

CLEE ACE HELPS BRING HISTORY BACK INTO THE PRESENT

By Paul Mueller

Who gets a chance to see newly discovered historical artifacts almost before anyone else (except her boss) – before the researchers, the historians, and the park rangers? With historical objects to analyze at her work station, the answer is Clee Ace, a former software insurance systems planner.

Clee Ace volunteers in the curatorial department of the park. She may be totally invisible to the visitors in her official position as Volunteer Curatorial Assistant, yet some of the items that she is inspecting could end up in the park's museum or become material for a new historical book written about the mill workers of the 19th century.



Clee Ace is caught off-guard by the flash of Ray Houde's camera at an orientation meeting in 2005.

What does Clee get to see? She scrutinizes anything imaginable. This runs the gamut from the mundane (yet still important) to the very surprising. Currently, she is sorting through a collection of 100 years of shop materials from the Grover Collection, a metal stamping business that made signs. She says that this collection of tools and lettering also has "100 years of shop dirt."

Clee said her identification and cataloguing work of historical items fits well with her earlier interest in archeology. At an historical park like Lowell, imagine being given a collection of old letters from a mill

worker, a few family photographs, and some tools that the worker used. At an archeological site, picture unearthing the shards of pottery, a few hand made tools, and some masonry remains of a buried dwelling.

Classifying historical objects requires addressing several needs. How can these artifacts be described in a way that is useful to contemporary and future researchers? How can these items be indexed in a way that they can be readily found by future researchers? How can these artifacts be preserved for future study? What do these artifacts tell us about the people working in the mills?

Clee contributes in the description and cataloguing process. While some items only need short summaries, others may require much time to understand. For example, she transcribed a collection of 184 letters of a mill girl that were difficult to read.

Clee also gets involved with inputting records of collections into the NPS museum catalogue system available on line. Dan Walsh, LNHP Collection Manager, is consulted frequently with this work and he also checks it. Neither Clee nor Dan Walsh takes the time to interpret the items with speculation and conclusions. That is the job of researchers and historians.

What does it take to get a volunteer job like this? You must be accurate in the description of the historical items of the collection. You must be able to impose order to a collection that arrives in a chaotic condition. You must be patient with bad handwriting, with accumulated dust, and with sifting through repetitive items and information.

Dan says that Clee's assistance three days a week has helped him immensely with curatorial operations. It frees him up to respond to National Park Service-mandated reports, help the many collection users, and assist with the development of new museum exhibits.

JIM BOYLE: ANGLING FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES

By Paul Mueller

With a background as diverse as Jim Boyle's, it is easy to understand his desire to work at a national park. Already, Jim has had a variety of life experiences: a lobsterman, a college professor, a post office employee, and a builder of several radio astronomy buildings for UMass-Amherst.

Likewise, at Lowell NHP Jim has set his sights performing many different tasks. Currently, he collects museum entrance fees, gives museum talks, and flags traffic for the park's trolley.

Being youthful and ready to try work in new fields, Jim comes to the park from a 55-plus retraining program. He receives a small stipend from Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley for his efforts.

Jim puts in 20 hours a week choosing to help Lowell, an unusually long week for a typical volunteer. For now, this time commitment is what he wants.



Jim Boyle at the Mill Girls and Immigrants Exhibit.

Jim's Lowell experiences relate well to his previous background. As a professor at Windham College in Putney, Vermont, Jim taught American History. There he enjoyed helping his students see connections of the past to the present.

At Lowell, Jim likes helping visitors draw for themselves their own connections regarding Lowell's place in world manufacturing history. The reward of talking to visitors who come from different geographical and cultural backgrounds is gaining new insights or coming to a mutual understanding about history, life, and the human condition.

Jim is fascinated by the conflicting theories about the closing of the mills. He asks visitors to think about these questions: "Did the mills close because labor costs became too high? Was there not 'corporate mismanagement' in competing in the wrong product lines, not absorbing the competition, and failing to modernize?"

Jim lets people come to their own conclusions, but he does believe that "labor became the scapegoat for the failure of the mills. Although profits were being made, very little was reinvested in keeping the city's mills going." Jim also posed an interesting hypothetical question: "Were textile profits destined to flow like a river to other areas of the world where costs were less?"

While doing a new job, Jim is reconnecting to his long-ago experience as a college professor. Indeed, he is enriching this park by bringing his own fresh individual perspective.

Jim feels he is learning from volunteering with us. Yet the reality is that we are learning from him.

PARK VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2005

As the New Year begins, we want to thank you for your many contributions to the park and the community in 2005. Without you, there would not have been a Lowell Folk Festival, a Lowell Summer Music Series, several canal cleanups, and so much else.

An exercise mandated by the National Park Service is the compilation of volunteer hours for

each fiscal year that runs from October 1 to September 30. The park volunteer program gets its budget in part based on these hours.

For 2005, the park reported a total of 76,388 volunteer hours, equivalent to 40 full-time employees. Yet we still hear about unreported volunteer contributions that make the figure lower than it should be.

Perhaps, we will never know the true extent of how you utilize your time for us behind the scenes. We do not always hear about the hours that you spend at home reading about Lowell history, researching in a library, or on a board preparing for a task or event.

We would like your help in the future in documenting your hours more completely. Please include all your behind-the-scenes hours when recording them on your timesheets.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS IN 2005

Below is a list of volunteer highlights, but it only touches the surface of what you actually did.



Molly Adams, a Museum Teacher Aide, for the Tsongas Industrial History Center, 2005.

* **The Tsongas Industrial History Center**, a partnership between the park and the **University of Massachusetts Lowell**, served over 50,000 school age students with curriculum-based, hands-on programs on national park themes.

* The community partner-volunteers working through the **Mogan Cultural Center** worked on exhibit teams under the coordination of Mehmed Ali to produce temporary exhibits and related programs: the Cambodian Expressions art exhibit in Boott Gallery, the French-Canadian and Puerto Rican community exhibits in the Mogan, and so much more.

* The Lowell Folk Festival in July drew over 200,000 visitors. To produce this event, **1,200 volunteers** logged over 19,000 hours.

* **Spindle City Corps**, our partner youth community service organization managed by Community Teamwork Inc., supplied approximately 4,500 hours for backlogged park maintenance and educational programming.

* The **Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society** members gave over 1,500 hours to the maintenance and interpretation of the locomotive and railcar along Dutton St.

* Other important volunteer partners helped the park keep to an ambitious schedule of special clean-up events. The groups helping us include: **Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners**; **Keep Lowell Beautiful**; **Mass Water Watch**; **Coalition for a Better Acre**; **River Ambassadors Program**; **Lowell Lock Monsters Boosters Club**; **Citizen Schools**; the **Bartlett School Honor Society** (under **Linda Almeida**); and the **City of Lowell**.

* **The Student Conservation Association** provided transportation intern students to assist in trolley operations during the summer.

* The **University of Massachusetts Lowell** work-study students for the second summer played valuable operational and interpretive roles at the park exhibit sites as well as the National Streetcar Museum.

* The **New England Railway Historical Society** volunteers contributed hundreds of hours in operating their own trolley provided by park partner Seashore Trolley Museum.



Cleanup crew helping the Coalition for a Better Acre and Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners, June 2005.

* At several events throughout the year, the **Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners** under the leadership of **Bill Moreau** in partnership with **Keep Lowell Beautiful** wrestled from the canals the unsightly, unhealthy rafts of trash that stagnate especially at locks and gates.

* **Bill and Barbara Rawnsley** kept the Moody St. Feeder Gatehouse clean and open for visitors on summer weekends; they also did a beautiful job with the garden in front.

* Longtime park volunteers **Dotty and Marie Baillargeon** gave out park and city information to thousands of patrons attending **Lowell Spinners** home baseball games. The park thanks the **Spinners** for helping make this happen.

* Among individual year-round volunteers, researcher **Dan Frantz** (856 hours), trolley crew member **Don Thomas** (565 hours), and Curatorial Assistant **Clee Ace** (526 hours) deserve special acknowledgement for contributing great amounts of time.

* The park Maintenance Division benefited additionally from **Greater Lowell Technical High School Work Experience interns** (under **Frank Heslin**), and groups and individuals assigned by the **Merrimack Education Center**.

* The **Lowell Summer Music Series** concerts at Boarding House Park benefited greatly from a wonderful and dependable **volunteer crew**, amassing over 1,300 hours.